

2015 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

VOTE CENTER

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why should Bartholomew County implement vote centers? There are many advantages to a vote center concept. Vote centers allow registered voters the freedom to vote at any voting location in the county. There is no longer a “wrong place to vote”. Vote centers also use up-to-date technology that helps reduce human error, replacing the paper poll book with an electronic poll book.

Where can I vote on Election Day? You may vote at any of the eight vote center locations. Voting locations will be open from 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. on Election Day. The locations are as follows: St. Johns Masonic Lodge, Grace Lutheran Church, Healing Waters Church, Donner Center, East Columbus United Methodist Church, The Commons, Main Source Bank (46 West) and Terrace Lake Church. [Click here for map and addresses of locations.](#)

Can I vote early? Yes, absentee (early) voting begins on October 6, 2015 at the Bartholomew County Voter Registration Office in the Courthouse.

(Hours: 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) In person, absentee (early) voting will also be available at Grace Lutheran Church and Main Source Bank (46 W) on Saturday, October 24th and Saturday, October 31st (Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

In addition to Saturday voting, Donner Center will be available for your convenience the Monday through Friday prior to the election, October 26th – October 30th (Hours: 11:00 a.m.- 7:00 p.m.) Donner Center will also be available for voting on Saturday, October 31st (Hours: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.)

What if I cannot vote in person at a satellite location or on Election Day?

You may request a ballot be sent to your home by mail simply by calling the Voter Registration Office at 1-812-379-1604. This is a great option for any voter, but especially the voter who has transportation concerns, is out of town or has physical limitations that prohibit voting at a vote center site.

If I am confined to my residence or reside in a nursing home facility, can I receive voting assistance? Yes, our non-partisan travel board will come to your location to assist you through the voting process. These arrangements should be made by calling our office at 1- 812-379-1604 or contacting the Activities Director of your nursing home facility.

What is the difference between a vote center and precinct voting? Precinct voting requires a voter to vote at the precinct in which they reside. A voter center concept will allow a voter to vote at the voting location of their choice. There is no longer a wrong location to vote.

Why are there only eight vote center locations when there were twenty-four locations to vote in a precinct based city election? In past elections, there were between 2-4 machines at each location. Vote centers will have between 10-12 machines at each location.

Will only using eight locations keep the elderly from voting? The Bartholomew County Election Board has worked diligently to make certain each sector of the city of Columbus has ample coverage. If voting in person at the vote center is a concern for the voter, the mail process for the absentee voter has not changed. A voter may request an absentee ballot be sent to their home by calling 1-812-379-1604. If the voter needs assistance in filling out the paperwork, our bi-partisan travel board will be happy to visit the voter at their location to assist with the process.

Why is an internet connection needed at a vote center? The KnowInk Poll Book, an Apple product made specifically for voting, will be used to replace the paper poll book. This new equipment requires the use of the internet. The voter may check in by scanning the back of their driver's license or by manual lookup.

Do vote centers negatively affect voter turnout? Other counties in the state of Indiana do not report an increase or decrease in voting turnout. It is our hope that the convenience of vote centers will make voting in our county a more enjoyable experience.

How do we plan to spread the word about vote centers? We plan to use every means of communication to get the word out about this change in voting for Bartholomew County. We will use The Republic, radio stations, commercials, social media, the county website, presentations to local groups and clubs, signs and word of mouth. In addition, each voter in the Columbus district will receive a postcard from the Voter Registration system informing them of this change. The card will also list all of the vote center locations so that they may choose the location of their choice to cast their ballot in the 2015 Municipal Election.

How will the poll workers know my correct ballot if every precinct is on the voting machine? After the voter checks in on the KnowInk Poll Pad, a paper receipt will then be printed. This receipt will contain information that will allow the poll worker to pull up the correct ballot for the voter.

Is there still voting by mail with vote centers? The absentee voting by mail has not changed. A voter may request a ballot via mail by calling the Voter Registration Office at 812-379-1604.

What are the positives of vote centers? First and foremost, there is no wrong place to vote. More early voting locations will allow the voter more opportunity to vote other than just on Election Day. The number of poll workers needed for an election will be greatly reduced which will result in a savings for the county. The electronic poll book will replace the paper poll book thus allowing a poll worker to check-in a voter more efficiently and eliminating human error.

Will new voting equipment be utilized for vote centers? Yes, Bartholomew County has purchased the Know Ink Poll Pads which have been created specifically for voting purposes. This piece of equipment replaces the paper poll book that has used in past elections. Our voting machines have not changed and are in no way linked to the poll pads. A voter may check in by scanning the barcode on their Indiana driver's license or the poll worker may look a voter up manually if a passport, state or US government issued ID is provided as identification.

Do you I have to pick a party in the Municipal Primary Election? Yes, a primary election determines the candidate from the Republican and Democrat parties who will be placed on the Municipal General ballot in November.